

# ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

## DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES



### NEWS RELEASE

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Date Issued: Monday, August 26, 2013  
Time: 2:00 pm

### Prince William Sound Salmon Fishery News Release #61

**SEINE FISHERIES:** PWSAC completed their pink salmon cost recovery program on July 31. PWSAC began their eggtake operations at WNH, AFK, and CCH on August 20, August 21, and August 24, respectively. Through August 25, PWSAC reports eggtake progress of 20% towards the final goal at WNH, 17% complete at AFK, and 1% complete at CCH. On August 26, PWSAC reports hatchery escapement (including fishway, barrier net, HEEZ, outside of HEEZ estimates) of 318,000 pink salmon at AFK, 600,000 at CCH, and 288,000 at WNH. Incorporating recent fecundity data and preseason assumptions as outlined in the PWSAC Annual Management Plans, it is anticipated that PWSAC could need **at least** an additional 259,000 pink salmon to reach AFK's eggtake goals, 354,000 fish at CCH, and 268,000 fish at WNH.

Recent pink salmon harvest estimates for Prince William Sound CPFs include approximately 1.07 million fish during the 36-hour period that ended on August 23, and at least 252,000 fish on August 24. Final harvest numbers by area for the August 25 fisheries in Prince William Sound are unavailable at the time of this announcement. However, it is estimated that at least 270,000 fish were harvested in PWS on August 25. Cumulative pink salmon harvest totals for Prince William Sound **through August 25** include approximately 1.8 million VFDA cost recovery fish, 1.7 million PWSAC cost recovery fish, and an estimated 85.3 million CPF fish. It is believed that there were fewer than 50 permit holders participating in the August 25 fishery.

**EASTERN DISTRICT:** Waters of the Eastern District, south of a line from Entrance Point to Potato Point, will open to commercial purse seine fishing for 15-hour periods beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 9:00 pm on Tuesday, August 27 and Wednesday, August 28. The next commercial fishing opportunity in Port Valdez may occur starting on Tuesday, September 3, dependent on surplus coho salmon escapement at SGH. Pink salmon harvest estimates for recent Eastern District CPFs include 38,200 on August 22 and 23, with 8 deliveries reported. Pink salmon harvest numbers for the August 24 Eastern District CPF are confidential.

**NORTHERN DISTRICT:** Waters of the Northern District, **excluding the CCH SHA and THA**, will open to commercial purse seine fishing for 15-hour periods beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 9:00 pm on Tuesday, August 27 and Wednesday, August 28. Time and area for future fishing opportunity in hatchery subdistricts will be dependent upon eggtake progress, and escapement at CCH. Pink salmon harvest estimates for recent Northern District CPFs include 200,000 on August 22 and 23, with 34 deliveries; 58,500 on August 24, with 18 deliveries.

**COGHILL DISTRICT:** Waters of the Coghill District, **excluding waters of the WNH THA and WNH SHA**, will open to commercial DRIFT GILLNET and PURSE SEINE fishing for 15-hour periods beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 9:00 pm on Tuesday, August 27 and Wednesday, August 28. Time and area for future fishing opportunity in hatchery subdistricts will be dependent upon eggtake progress, and escapement at WNH. Pink salmon harvest estimates for recent Coghill District CPFs include 321,000 on August 22 and 23, and 73,600 on August 24. There were 40 purse seine and 190 gillnet deliveries reported for these periods.

**NORTHWESTERN DISTRICT:** Waters of the Northwestern District will open to commercial purse seine fishing for 15-hour periods beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 9:00 pm on Tuesday, August 27 and Wednesday, August 28. There were no harvests reported for the August 22 through August 24 Northwestern District CPFs.

**SOUTHWESTERN DISTRICT:** Waters of the Southwestern District, **excluding waters of the AFK Outer HEEZ**, will open to commercial purse seine fishing for 15-hour periods beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 9:00 pm on Tuesday, August 27 and Wednesday, August 28. The AFK Outer HEEZ consists of the waters of the SHA west and south of a line from 60° 03.398' N. lat., 148° 03.326' W. long. to 60° 03.017' N. lat., 148° 02.547' W. long. Time and area for future fishing opportunity in hatchery subdistricts will be dependent upon eggtake progress, and escapement at AFK. Pink salmon

harvest estimates for recent Southwestern District CPFs include 515,000 on August 22 and 23, with 89 deliveries; 102,500 on August 24, with 23 deliveries.

**MONTAGUE DISTRICT:** Waters of the Montague District will open to commercial purse seine fishing for 15-hour periods beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 9:00 pm on Tuesday, August 27 and Wednesday, August 28. There were no harvests reported for the August 22 through August 24 Montague District CPFs.

**SOUTHEASTERN DISTRICT:** Waters of the Southeastern District will open to commercial purse seine fishing for 15-hour periods beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 9:00 pm on Tuesday, August 27 and Wednesday, August 28. There were no harvests reported for the August 22 through August 24 Southeastern District CPFs.

**The next scheduled salmon fisheries announcement is anticipated to occur by 2:00 pm Wednesday, August 28.**

Permit holders are advised that unscheduled announcements based on current escapement data may occur at any time inseason either establishing an additional period or extending an open period.

Announcement recordings are available for **gillnet fisheries at 907-424-7535 and seine fisheries at 907-424-7345. In addition, announcement recordings are available in Anchorage at 267-2843.**

Additionally, announcements, inseason harvest data, and escapement data are available at the following web addresses:

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareacopperriver.main> (Copper River homepage) or

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareapws.main> (Prince William Sound homepage).

Unless otherwise specified, all openings are clock openings based on Alaska Daylight Time, which is based on Coordinated Universal Time and may be obtained by calling 303-499-7111.

The department encourages commercial permit holders to renew their licenses early and to check their CFEC vessel registration stickers to make sure that they are current.

The department also encourages permit holders to report observed violations to Wildlife Safeguard at 800-478-3377. Reports are anonymous and cash rewards may be paid for successful prosecution of violations.

PWS commercial fishers are reminded that area fisheries often necessitate fishing in close proximity to marine mammals. Under the Marine Mammals Protection Act (MMPA), the PWS drift gillnet fishery is classified as a Category II fishery. Participants in Category I and II fisheries must be registered in the Marine Mammal Avoidance Program (MMAP) to be authorized for lawful incidental, but not intentional, marine mammal takes during fishing.

However, this authorization explicitly does **not** exempt holders of commercial fishing permits from the MMPA prohibition on takes of marine mammals listed as endangered or threatened under the Endangered Species Act. As a participant in the PWS drift gillnet fishery you are automatically registered in the Marine Mammal Authorization Program (MMAP) by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). As a participant in a Category II fishery, you must:

- Maintain an MMAP Authorization Certificate, or a photocopy, on board the vessel while engaging in any of the fisheries identified on the reverse side of the certificate. For non-vessel or set net fisheries, the enclosed Certificate, or a photocopy, must be in the possession of the permit holder during fishing operations. This Certificate, in combination with a current, valid state or Federal fishing permit, will serve as your authorization to incidentally take non-endangered or non-threatened marine mammals in the course of commercial fishing operations.
- Report all injuries and mortalities of marine mammals within 48 hours of returning from the trip during which these takes occurred using the MMAP Mortality/Injury Reporting Form (visit [http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/interactions/mmap\\_reporting\\_form.pdf](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/interactions/mmap_reporting_form.pdf) for a copy).
- If so requested, take an observer aboard your vessel.

Purse seine and set gillnet gear are classified as a category III fisheries under the MMPA. Category III fishery participants are automatically exempted from the incidental take prohibition in the MMPA. Therefore, you do not need to maintain the MMAP certificate aboard your vessel, but must report any incidental takes of marine mammals within 48 hours of the incident or your return to port. Such reports must be made on the Marine Mammals Authorization Program Mortality/Injury Reporting Form.

Because some marine mammals are also listed under the Endangered Species Act, incidental takes are also regulated under that act and are not authorized.

**All** MMPA category fisheries are liable for incidentally taking ESA listed species.

Please reference [http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/esa\\_factsheet.pdf](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/esa_factsheet.pdf) for a list of marine mammals currently listed under the ESA (you should periodically check with the National Marine Fisheries Service for any changes in listed species). Under the ESA, take means to “harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct.” 16U.S.C. 1532(19); and harass means an “intentional or negligent act or omission which creates the likelihood of injury to the wildlife by annoying it to such an extent as to significantly disrupt normal behavioral patterns which include, but are not limited to, breeding, feeding, or sheltering.” (50 C.F.R. 17.3).

To reduce the possibility of incidentally taking an ESA listed species and its associated liability ADF&G recommends that:

- Fishermen participating in area fisheries remain vigilant in monitoring gear when marine mammals may be present.
- Fishermen use avoidance measures (e.g., not fishing or relocating fishing activities when marine mammals are present or likely to be present) to minimize interactions with marine mammals.
- Avoid fishing in areas where marine mammals are likely to be present at night or when visibility or weather conditions make it difficult to spot marine mammals.

For further questions concerning marine mammal regulations call NMFS at 907-271-5006.